

FACTSHEET

High Occupancy Vehicle Lane Stickers

California law allows single-occupant vehicle use of High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) or carpool lanes by qualifying clean, alternative-fuel vehicles. The program was born out of the need to find ways to improve air quality and ease freeway congestion. In order for a vehicle with just one occupant to use an HOV lane, it must display a California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) issued Clean Air Vehicle Sticker.

Yellow HOV stickers: On July 1, 2011, yellow HOV stickers expired. Yellow stickers granted HOV access to hybrid or alternatively-fueled vehicles that met the state's advanced technology partial zero emission (AT PZEV) standard for criteria pollutant emissions and had a 45 miles per gallon or greater fuel economy highway rating. These stickers were primarily issued for the Toyota Prius. With the expiration of these stickers, hybrid vehicles are no longer allowed to operate in a carpool lane unless the minimum passenger requirement is met, and a driver may be cited for not meeting the minimum passenger requirement.

White HOV stickers: White HOV stickers allow single-occupant, super clean vehicles that meet the federal definition of an Inherently Low Emission Vehicle to drive in carpool lanes. These vehicles are certified pure zero emission vehicles (100 percent battery electric and hydrogen fuel cell), which have no tailpipe emissions over their lifetime, and certain dedicated compressed natural gas vehicles. Examples of vehicles eligible for white stickers are the Tesla Roadster, Toyota RAV 4 EV, Honda Clarity, and Honda Civic CNG. To date, DMV has issued over 21,000 white stickers, and state law places no limit on the number that it can issue. White stickers are valid until January 1, 2015.

Green HOV stickers: Green stickers allow single-occupant vehicles that meet California's Enhanced AT PZEV requirements to drive in carpool lanes. The Chevrolet Volt, Ford C-Max Energi, Ford Fusion Energi, and Toyota Prius Plug-In are the only vehicles eligible for green stickers. State law limits the number of green stickers that DMV may issue to 40,000; as of January 1, 2013, DMV has issued nearly 9,000. As with the white stickers, green stickers will be valid until January 1, 2015.

A list of qualifying vehicles for these HOV stickers is available from the California Air Resources Board website: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/msprog/carpool/carpool.htm#FAQ>.

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